passports were pending in Passport Office, Delhi alone causing undue hardship to the public. It was then decided to requisition Government employees in public interest to work after office hours and on holidays to clear the backlog.

(c) Statistics show that the demand for passport services is constantly on the rise. This is being addressed in several ways including by way of decentralisation, rationalisation of work process, increasing efficiency of Government officials and computerisation.

Bl-Linguai entries in Passports

†1744. SHRIMATI SARLA MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of EXTERNALAFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the entries in the passports being issued in the country are being made in Hindi or Bi-lingually; and

(b) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) Passport entries cannot be made in Hindi alone as it is presented to foreign authorities on entry and exit. Presently, passport entries are being made in English alone.

(b) The matter has been examined in details and for the time being, it has not been found possible for technical reasons to make bi-lingual entries in the passports.

Suchetgarh-Siyalkot Bus Sevice

1745. SHRI T. S. BAJWA. Will the Minister of EXTERNALAFFAIRS be pleased to refer to answer to Starred Question 41 given in Rajya Sabha on 3rd March, 2005 and state:

(a) if so, whether Government would consider opening of Suchetgarh (in R.S. Pura)-Siyalkot bus service involving 11 kms. from border to meet the long pressing demand of people on both sides;

(b) if so, by when this bus service is likely to be opened; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

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† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) and (b) India had, in June 2004, during the Foreign Secretary level discussions, as a part of the composite dialogue, proposed a number of cooperation measures to Pakistan for enhancing people to people contact across the International Border (IB) and Line of Control (LoC), including the Jammu-Sialkot bus link.

These proposals, including the Jammu-Sailkot bus link, would be implemented once there is positive response from Pakistan and details have been agreed upon.

(c) Does not arise.

Visit of Secretaries abroad on diplomatic passport

1746. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Secretaries to Government of India from Scientific Departments are eligible to visit abroad on diplomatic passport while visiting abroad as per invitation received by the officer in his personal capacity and after leave sanctioned by the competent authority;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the details of diplomatic passport allowed to be used by the Secretaries to Government of India from Ministry of Science and Technology for the last three years including the country visited and the purpose of visit, year-wise and category-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) Rules do not allow use of diplomatic passports for personal or private visits abroad.